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March 9, 1956

Dear Allen:

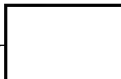
Many thanks for having talked to Streibert. I called him on the telephone right away and sent him a letter, copy of which I enclose. I would be very much pleased and would appreciate it if you would read this. He and/or Rabb may discuss this with you again and I would like you to know why it was not justified to refuse the letter to me at my first request.

Very sincerely yours,

Victor Bator

Allen W. Dulles, Esq.
2430 E Street
Administration Building
Washington, D. C.

Encl:

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C O P Y

March 8, 1956

Dear Mr. Streibert:

In pursuance of our telephone conversation of today I want to give you a more complete picture of the Ballet Theatre matter.

First of all, to make your file complete, I send you a copy of my memorandum about our approach to the problem, and a copy of the proposed draft of the presidential message. Also, I send you a copy of the letter of Mr. Kevin McCann turning down my request. As I pointed out over the telephone I do not think that it would be out of line and unfair to the other participants of the exchange program if we received a presidential message not given to everyone else. In most Mediterranean countries no other organisation can be sent but the Ballet Theatre. In the Islamic countries the great orchestras cannot be sent because they have no understanding yet of that kind of music. Anything that is theatre, expressing itself in the English language, could not be sent because they do not speak the language. On the other hand, the combination of dance and music is near to their hearts and cultural interest and is something that alone will make a strong impression on them.

There is one more point to be considered. The great orchestral societies do not need to spend additional money on such a tour, but travelling expenses. They play numbers of their regular programs. The Ballet Theatre in order to create great interest must have a larger number of ballets than they have at home. They have to commission new ballets, have to carry more scenery and have a greater variety of costumes than the requirements of their appearances in New York or within this country.

Thus for both reasons the tour of the Ballet Theatre in the Mediterranean countries is in need of greater support than the touring orchestral societies, and there is no other American art that can be substituted for the Ballet Theatre in these countries and in most countries of the Far East.

I want to mention also that President Eisenhower did give a supporting statement dated June 9, 1955, to the Ballet Theatre company before it went on its South American tour. The

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exceptional situation of the Ballet Theatre was recognised at that time and I hope it will be recognised now again. By the way, I do not think that my proposed draft is an endorsement of a fund raising effort and I certainly had no intention of making it one.

We plan to invite to the Opening Night of our Metropolitan Opera House season on April 17th the Ambassadors of the fifteen countries where the Ballet Theatre will go on its tour and the heads of the delegations of these countries to the United Nations. We would like to feature in the program of that gala night a picture of the President and a copy of the message I request. This would greatly enhance the importance of the Ballet Theatre tour in their countries and would thereby increase its public importance.

I thought it would be useful to put my request and the arguments militating in its favor on paper.

Very sincerely yours,

Victor Bator

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Director
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Encl: